

**Ministerial Declaration of the Least Developed Countries
New York, 29 September 2009**

We, the Ministers and Heads of delegations of the Least Developed Countries (LDC), having met in New York, on 29 September 2009, during the general debate of the 64th session of the United Nations General Assembly, held from 23 September to 1 October 2009,

Recalling the Declaration and Program of Action for LDCs for the decade 2001-2010 and the outcome of the High-level Meeting on the Mid-term Review of progress made in the implementation of commitments therein,

Reaffirming the ministerial declaration at the high-level segment of ECOSOC substantive session of 2009, on the theme “Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to global public health”,

Recalling ECOSOC resolution of 31 July 2009 on the implementation of the Program of Action for the LDCs for the Decade 2001-2010 contained in E/2009/L.39,

Recalling also the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and Its Impact on Development, held from 24-26 June 2009 where it was recognized that the economic and social progress achieved by LDCs in recent years is being threatened by the global economic crisis and that therefore support for them needs to be increased,

Taking note of the Doha Declaration on Financing for Development of 2008 in which support for LDCs with respect to the integration in the global trade system and financing for development was reiterated,

Taking note also of the annual progress report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Program of Action for the LDCs for the Decade 2001-2010,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 63/227 to convene the Fourth United Nations Conference on the LDCs at a high level in 2011 to undertake a comprehensive appraisal of the implementation of the Program of Action for the Decade 2001-2010 and adopt a renewed partnership between the LDCs and their development partners;

Adopt the following Declaration:

1. We take note of the progress made by the Least Developed Countries (LDC) towards implementing the goals of the Program of Action for LDCs for the decade 2001-2010 as evidenced by improved growth performance and social progress as well as graduation of several countries from the list of LDCs;

2. We remain concerned, however, about the uneven and insufficient progress achieved in the implementation of the Program of Action for the LDCs for the Decade 2001-2010 at a time when the international community has embarked on the preparation for the Fourth United Nations Conference on the LDCs which will undertake the comprehensive appraisal of its implementation, and stresses the urgent need to address areas of weakness in its implementation and the continued precarious socio-economic situation in many LDCs through a strong commitment to the objectives, goals and targets of the Program of Action;

3. We express also our concern on the severe disproportionate impact of the global economic and financial crisis on LDCs and recognize that the social and economic progress achieved during recent years, particularly on the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals is now threatened in developing countries, particularly in the LDCs;

4. We express further concern that the number of people living in extreme poverty, which was already a matter of concern, is growing alarmingly in the wake of the global economic crisis, with an increasing number of people at risk of malnutrition, in particular children and women, and recognize that there are important linkages among development, poverty eradication and gender equality;

5. We recognize that the global food crisis still continues to affect the livelihood and overall economic situation of the people of the LDCs resulting in extreme poverty and hunger. We underscore the urgent and concerted efforts to ensure immediate relief measures for supply of food to the needy people and long term sustainable measures for food security and agricultural development in the LDCs;

6. We take note of measures undertaken by the LDCs to mitigate the effects of the global financial and economic crisis on their economies, and recognize that the LDCs lack the capacity to mitigate the impact of the global financial and economic crisis. We call for a streamlining of conditionality to ensure that they are timely, tailored and targeted and support developing countries in the face of financial, economic and developmental challenges;

7. In this regard, we acknowledge global efforts to stabilize the world economy, including measures taken by the United Nations system and other stakeholders as well as efforts by individual developed and developing countries;

8. We take note of the Global Plan for recovery and Reform adopted by G20 summit held in London on 2 April 2009, and recognize its commitment to make available an additional \$1.1 trillion program aimed at revitalizing the world economy. A major part of these funds will be available for use by emerging markets and developing countries. A limited share (\$50 billion) of these resources was targeted specifically to low-income countries. We call upon the G20 to further consider addressing the financial needs of developing countries, particularly LDCs. We also call upon all G20 countries to follow through on their commitments and to monitor the implementation of them. While recognizing the decisions taken in the G20, we are

resolved to strengthen the role of the United Nations and its Member States in economic and financial affairs, including its coordinating role;

9. We remain concerned that the resources earmarked by the international community for the LDCs are small in relation to the magnitude of the impact of the global financial and economic crisis and the financing needs of LDCs to cope with this adverse external shocks;

10. In this regard, we urge the international community, development partners and multilateral development institutions to scale up support to LDCs through increased financial and technical support to enable them cope with multiple external shocks and to mitigate the impact of the crisis on the most vulnerable segments of their populations;

11. We recognize the importance of remittances to the LDCs and call upon the international community to provide additional support to countries experiencing serious negative effect as a result of impact of financial crisis on migrant remittances; In this regard, we welcome the initiative of the Government of Benin for a pilot program to establish the International Migrant Remittances Observatory (IMRO) in accordance with the declaration of the Ministerial Meeting held in Cotonou from 9-10 February 2006 and direct the LDC Coordination Bureau and the Ambassadors in New York to conclude, as soon as possible, the negotiations of the proposed Memorandum of Understanding discussed in the Working Group of Remittances, in consultation with LDC member states;

12. We urge also the United Nations system organizations, the Bretton Woods institutions, bilateral and multilateral donors and other development partners in view of the global crises to increase their assistance for the LDCs in translating goals and targets of the Program of Action into concrete actions in the light of their national development priorities and to collaborate with and provide support to, as appropriate, the relevant national development forums and follow-up mechanisms especially in the preparations for the Fourth United Nations Conference on the LDCs;

13. We reiterate the invitation to all development and trading partners to support the implementation of the transition strategy of countries graduating from the list of LDCs, to avoid any abrupt reductions in either official development assistance or technical assistance provided to the graduated country and to consider extending to the graduated country trade preferences previously made available for their LDC status or reducing them in a phased manner, and urge them to defer the graduation timeframe already set out for the graduating countries in consistent with 2015 MDG target;

14. We recognize the specific geographical constraints and problems faced by the landlocked least developed countries (LLLDCs) which continue to suffer from transit transport cost, associated with poor transit facilities, transit policies and additional border crossings. In this regard, we call for greater attention to be given by the

international community to help these countries address their special development needs as called for in the Brussels Program of Action.

15. We reaffirm the special needs and challenges faced by countries emerging from conflicts. In this regard, we urge the international community and the UN system to address these needs and challenges and take urgent and concrete action in the area of financial assistance and technical support and infrastructure development, in order to achieve the internationally agreed development goals including the MDGs, and help these countries achieve a smooth transition from relief to development;

16. We underscore that development must remain at the heart of the Doha Round of trade negotiations, and we urge the international community to take on board the interests and difficulties of LDCs, as the most vulnerable group in the United Nations community, in order to effectively integrate our countries in the multilateral trading system;

17. In this regard, we call for an early, ambitious, successful and balanced conclusion to the Doha Round that increases market access, generates increased trade flows and focuses on the needs of the LDCs and emphasizes the importance of the commitment to implement duty-free and quota-free access for LDCs, as agreed in the WTO Hong Kong Ministerial Declaration; to make operationally effective the principle of special and differential treatment for developing countries; to the parallel elimination of all forms of export subsidies; to disciplines on all export measures with equivalent effect; to substantial reductions in trade-distorting domestic support, in accordance with the mandate of the Doha Round and the WTO Hong Kong Ministerial Declaration; and to meet existing aid-for-trade pledges;

18. We urge developed countries that have not already done so, and developing countries in a position to do so, to provide immediate, predictable, duty-free and quota-free market access on a lasting basis to all products originating from all the LDCs with simplified and transparent rules of origin so as to facilitate exports from the LDCs;

19. We urge international community to help the LDCs to diversify their economic base through developing their productive capacities in order to benefit fully from globalization and global integration, to ensure that opportunities from globalization benefit poor people in the LDCs and to manage risks of insecurity and exclusion;

20. We call upon development partners to respond to trade-capacity needs of the LDCs by significantly increasing their contributions to the trust fund of the Enhanced Integrated Framework for Trade-related Technical Assistance for the LDCs;

21. We underscore the urgent need to operationalize the aid for trade initiative with sufficient additional, non conditional and predictable funding, which should primarily support the LDCs to address their supply constraints, diversify their

economies, promote value addition and improve their infrastructural, human and institutional capacities;

22. We recognize that the impacts of climate change severely hampers the lives and livelihoods of millions of poor living in the LDCs, especially in the small islands and low-lying coastal States. We welcome the adoption of the Bali Plan of Action for a long-term cooperative action to address mitigation, adaptation, finance and technology transfers;

23. We express our deep concerns on the lack of progress in the current climate change negotiations, and urge the developed countries to commit to deeper cuts in emission of greenhouse gases. We also urge developed countries to increase financial and technological support for adaptation to climate change and facilitate transfer of technologies for sustainable development of our countries. In this regard, we welcome the Secretary-General's initiative to hold Summit on Climate Change on 22 September 2009 in New York, and hope that it will galvanize political will of all the countries to reach a successful conclusion in Copenhagen in this December, taking into account all our concerns;

24. We reaffirm the decision of the United Nations General Assembly contained in its resolution 63/227 of December 2008 to convene the Fourth United Nations Conference on the LDCs in 2011 at the highest political level;

25. We emphasize that the fourth United Nations Conference on the LDCs should strengthen concerted global actions in support of the LDCs;

26. We take note of the progress made in the preparation for the Conference at national, regional and global levels and commend the United Nations Office of the High Representative for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS), UNDP, United Nations Regional Commissions and other United Nations agencies and organizations for their efforts;

27. We welcome with appreciation the offer of the Government of Turkey to host the Fourth United Nations Conference on LDCs to be held in 2011;

28. We urge the United Nations regional commissions, in particular the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) to step up efforts in the preparation of regional reviews and provide support in collaboration with the United Nations Resident coordinators and OHRLLS to LDCs in the preparation of country-reviews.